THE SISTER OF THE WIND

GRACE
FALLOW
NORTON

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO.

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By Grace Fallow Norton

A SISTER OF THE WIND AND OTHER POEMS.

LITTLE GRAY SONGS FROM ST. JOSEPH'S.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

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BY

GRACE FALLOW NORTON

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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To

Our Mother of Much Understanding

Out of my hours of idleness
I wove my gift for you,
And what it is, is all I am:
It is not what I do.

For deeds would be but swords at last,
Wherewith these hands, set free,
Should hew new pathways unto that
Same thing myself would be.

(Yet easier 't were to give the deed,
Blindly, and thus have done,
Than from blank spaces of the sky
To attempt your fitting crown.)

Out of my hours of idleness
And out of silence grew
This gift of me that now I give,
With all my heart, to you.

ON THE HILL

To Faeriel

The red upon the hill
Taketh away my will.

EMILY DICKINSON.

Measure me not by thy sorrow's rod,
Gauge me not by the rod of thy grief.
Loveliness goeth not sorrow-shod,
Though she be clad in the fallen leaf.

Stay me not in thy lanes of love,
Bind me not in thy heart's lone haunt.
Loveliness wandereth; from every grove
Soundeth her cymbal and riseth her chaunt.

Tell me not: "If thou hope we hear,
But shouldst thou despair we will turn aside."
Loveliness knoweth and kneeleth near
Pain and despair and peace and pride.

What was thy joy? I never knew.
What was thy hope but my hope's hell
Yet have I joyed when thy song rang true,
Loving its loveliness all too well.

Other my fire than thy altar-fire —
O and my far may be near to thee :
Yet — hold me not to thy heart's desire :
Ask but if Loveliness walk with me.

OF SONGS

Of songs I can make four kinds:
Songs of the corn and the crows in the air,
Of the hill and of two wandering there,
With dew and with darkness upon their hair;
And still songs about minds,
And my Thought who seems so strange and so old,
So cruel often and so cold,
But who weaves with radiant rose and gold;
And songs of the Joy that binds
All joys and is as a smiling Face
Out of faces, 'mid desperate places a Place,
All-good, All-graciousness, All-grace!
And songs of the enchanted winds
And the souls of the shining sorrowful stars

And night's pale Queen and the red god
Mars,
Of their hates and their woes and their ter-
rible wars.

(Proud planets, they pass in their cloudy
cars,
And I sing them, beating my prison-bars.
It is night, it is night, when I sing the
stars!)

REBIRTH

When I went out to the meadow,
  When I went over the hill,
The whole world was a-waiting
  My coming to fulfill.

The whole world was a-waiting
  To sing its song for me,
To make for me its color—
  The earth, the sky, the sea.

I knew not that my going
  Was such a wondrous thing,
Till I came unto the meadow
  And the world began to sing.

It sang: "To-day and ever
  Your soul 's another hue,

Because of the purple shadows
And because the sky is blue;

"O you are changed forever—
Bred in the blood of you
Are beach and billow and shallow
And green and gold and blue;

"Forever and forever
Because of the ancient hill,
And the motion and the music
And the moments when all is still."

And I have taken the purple,
The green and the sunny gold,
And the long, long years of the old hill,
Although I am not old;

And I have taken the sea-swing,
(Though who can carry a wave?)

And I have taken the sea-song,
I shall sing it in my grave.

Encarnadined, incarnate,
Bred in the blood of me—
And I am one forever
With the earth and sky and sea.

INVOCATION

O SUN, slow-sinking, hail!
O western coverts, hail!
O wind, my brother, and earth, my mother,
Hail and hail and all hail!

O silent forest, hail!
O sighing billow, hail!
And hail, fair-bodied moon, my goddess!
I cry to thee, Lift thy veil!

See, I stand before thee with my lyre.
Strike, strike the chords with thy white fire
And cast thy spell upon my song —
O Sovereign, I have waited long!
O part thy veil, pour out the strong
Wines of thy beauty, for I dare
To drink; thy effulgence I would wear;

Thy light, thy flight I would translate
Into rare tones reverberate.
O Swayer of Tides, Enchantress, Queen —
I lift my lyre! From Heaven lean
And break the strings, if so it be
Thy suppliant have no part in thee!

"AND I'M BUT A FLAME AND A SHADOW"

Real, real, real —
My hands in the meadow-grass,
Insensate, a sea of green,
Where the unthinking wind doth pass.

Real, real — gray wings
Sweep over my sea of green;
O wild gull, though thou livest,
Thou know'st not what life must mean.

Real — O green meadow,
Warm-bosomed, heavy, still . . .
And I'm but a flame and a shadow
That passeth over the hill

A PRAYER

I too would pray:
O King of Day,
O Queen of Night,
Send forth thy heralds, pale princes and angels burning bright!
Bid them bring me my desire,
Bid them yield me my delight.
I would have a lotus of fire
And a lily of light!
A flower of noon
And a flower of the moon.
A flower of flame and fire
And a blossom white.
Bid them come now, crying and singing, bearing my boon!
For I would have a lotus of fire
And a lily of light!

MIST–MAD

It was because the mist had come,
I must arise and go
From out the arms that are my home,
Mist-summoned, startled, slow.

It was because the mist had come
That I arose and sighed,
Gathered my garments white as foam
And drew the still door wide,

And passed as silent as all hours
That through all nights have flowed,
Dream-whiter than the white lace-flowers
That dream beside the road.

(Yea, silent as the hours that pass
Slow-footed ere the light,

I trailed my mantle o'er the grass
And floated through the night.)

My white feet moved within the dusk,
I drifted down the vale.
(O follow not, O never ask
What made the night-owl wail!)

Within mist-spaces, like black towers
The sudden trees did loom;
Then white mist closed, as close white doors,
Sudden 'twixt room and room.

(O follow not, O ask me not,
Nor mark too close the tale;
Suffice it that all eyes were shut
And mist-bound all the vale.)

Mist-mad I held my white hands up
To catch the faint moon-glow;

Mist-mad I clove my hands' white cup
And swayed me to and fro.

Mist-mad within a moon-shot mist,
Mist-mad in moon-white shoon,
I tore my veil, my hair I kissed,
I bowed before the moon.

I turned me, turned me, round and round,
And O, the spell pressed sore,
But O, at last the word I found,
And turned me round no more.

I called unto the veilèd moon,
I hailed the hidden stars,
And tears I begged them for a boon,
Chilled on the cold moon-bars.

Yea, tears I begged them they would give,
My panting breath to free —
That I might weep, that I might live —
If they would succor me.

Methought they sighed, the silver stars,
Methought the moon's faint sigh
Was blown across her white altars
To answer my lone cry.

For tears, gray tears they gave at last,
To ease the fearful spell,
And ere my mad mist-dance was past
I had wept deep and well.

(O follow not, O ask me not,
Nor mark too close the tale;
Suffice it that a wind was wrought
And rain fell through the vale.)

I left my lover's arms, mist-drawn;
Long hours I was away;
The tears I brought him at the dawn
Were still and chill and gray.

THE SUN-WORSHIPER

Doth the world wear the West
For a jewel on her breast,
When she waits, when she waits,
At the great iron gates?

O my lover, O my lover,
I have hastened Heaven over,
And my flying feet have found no other rest.

Doth the world wear the East
For a robe to the feast,
When she goes, when she goes,
All in opal and in rose?

O my lover, O my lover,
I have hunted Heaven over,
And my longing and my sighs have never ceased.

Doth the world lift the South,
Silver chalice, to her mouth,
When she lies, when she lies,
'Neath his azure ardent eyes?

O my lover, O my lover,
I have harried Heaven over,
And there is no other cup for my heart's drouth.

O white pearl of the North,
Will the world know thy worth,
On the day, on the day,
When he turns away?

O my lover, O my lover,
I have hunted Heaven over,
And again your cruel hounds would drive me forth!

MALERUDE

My love hath bade me bring a wave
To cover her bright body bare,
All purfled, fringed, and Tyrian-tinged,
Fine as she is and fair:
This is the cloak that she would have
Beneath the torrent of her hair.

I brought my love a beryl-stone,
A jacinth and a chrysolite,
Got from a sage of hoary age
Who cursed all beauty's might,
(Nothing he had to call his own;
I too weep often in the night.)

I brought my love a heart-sweet song
That passed me in the Wishing Wood;
For when a bird flew west I heard

The song fly east and stood
Upon the eastern borders long,
To snare the song for Malerude.

She laughed, the Scornful! So I go
With net and spear, with snare and lure,
To bring the wave she longs to have;
I'll spear it swift and sure
When foam about the rim doth show,
Pure as her lips are vain and pure.

I'll take it when an opal flush
Fills all the hollow and the frail
Green reeds that bend above it blend
With cloud and crescent pale;
I'll lift it in a holy hush —
Thinking on that which it shall veil.

The little moon for broidery,
For clasp two stars of faintest gold.

O for her hair to weave my snare,
O golden fold on fold!
O for a wave to cover me —
She is so cruel and so cold.

WEB ON THE LOOM

A Hill-Prayer

I LIE still and dumb
On the naked earth;
It is enough to come
Where all things have their birth.

It is enough to lie,
Web on the loom;
Weave, O Mother, I sigh,
Where my torn threads leave room.

Dumb I am and still
On the bare brown breast
Of the deep-browed fecund hill,
Where soon the sun will rest.

It is enough, O sun,
To feel you pass,

To hear the singing one,
The wind, move over the grass.

It is enough to know
That there is light,
That the green fields below
Passive await my sight:

Blind on her breast to thrill
'Neath sound and scent
And silence of the hill,
My heart with the hill-heart blent.

Mother, heavy I lie,
Web of thy womb.
Weave more life, I cry,
Ere thou yieldest me shroud and tomb.

THE GREEN CANOE

When I come to visit you
In my little green canoe,
O'er the waters lilting, tilting,
Trailing lilies, fair, unwilting,
Splashing, laughing, swinging
Lazy paddle, singing
Sweet, to you:

On your shore I 'll find all spread
A feast of fruit and faery bread—
Kiss the cup you bring, love, flinging
Round your shoulders, ever singing,
All my lilies, looping
Loose buds on your drooping
Lily head.

This my song shall be:
O I am the spirit of a tree
And my sister is the spirit of the sea.

(Green canoe's the very tree,
Kissing all day long the sea.)
Look into my eyes, there be
Rhythm, height, and mystery
Of the tree, of the tree;
Rhythm, depth, and mystery
Of the sea.

When you know my song all through,
Then farewell, farewell to you,
My white love, I mind the calling
Of the silver sweet enthralling
Singing sea, where daintily
Flits the far-off faintly
Green canoe.

ISLAND SONG

From my isle to thy isle
'T is such a little way,
Across the twinkling waters
Of our merry little bay.

Thy pretty crescent island, leaf-gay by day I see,
At eve, mist-shimmering, silvery-gray, from out my balcony,

Where lone long nights I dream that a summons comes at dawn,
And springing from my hammock see the first green on thy lawn.

Ah, should there be a waving from thy wee tower white,
I 'd leap into my moth-wing'd boat and flit to thee to-night!

Alas! From out thy turrets no signal bright I see:
Here still I roam a stranger and but dream my way to thee.

From this isle to thy isle
'T were such a little way,
Across the moonlit waters
Of the bonny little bay.

ON THE DAY THE SUN LIES DEAD

On the day the Sun lies dead
Who shall clasp his golden head?
Who shall plain and who shall moan
For his empire overthrown?

He that spun us, one by one,
Lifted, loosed us — our lord Sun —
Who shall heap his towering pyre,
Faithful to his gift of fire?

Shining warrior, he must lie
Loveless, unwept, in the sky,
All his host of stars around,
Dead upon heaven's battle-ground.

Yea, this anguish he must taste:
Paling, he must watch us waste;
Failing, hear us curse his reign,
Innocent among his slain!

Nay, but One, who bore his light,
Treading pallid, night by night,
Where his burning footsteps led —
On the day the Sun lies dead

May not She, queen-slave of hope,
Through the twilight to him grope,
Know at last her heart's desire,
Leaping, faithful, on his pyre?

Ah, vain thought! Her thralldom ends
When at last her white bow bends
And devoid of light her quiver —
When her hope is gone forever.

On the day the Sun lies dead
None shall clasp his golden head,
None shall weep and none shall moan:
He must lie alone, alone.

AT SUNSET

The West is burning and our hearts catch fire!
Lo, with bowed head, in awe before the pyre
Of all day's dreams, I dare my dreams unread.

O august sacrifice! Driven to thy flame
Was it a thousand bulls of heaven that came,
When the white day by night's first shaft lay dead?

Or hath Heaven's Rose, at last — too late — unfurled
The petals of her passion o'er the world,
The purple and the amber and the red!

THE SILVER RIVER

Farewell, I said, sweet meadow-grass.
Farewell I let the light wind pass.
I watch the shadows, one by one;
Farewell, thou gold slow-setting sun.

I go within and fold my hands.
O wondrous are the day's bright lands
And evening's robe with roseate hem,
But dearer now my dreams of them.

The stars I know creep to the sky;
The moon will soon be swimming high;
O light-filled pools and silver streams!
O silver river of my dreams.

FLAMES

To Louisa Mendoza

. . . O Vénus, ô déesse !
Je regrette les temps de l'antique jeunesse.

ARTHUR RIMBAUD.

I walled me yestereven with indifference.
But still the flames broke free —
I dreamed of thee.
My wild heart leaped and laughed, thou dear —
Thou fair and dear —
To find the red flame still so near,
The white flame so intense,
To which my life does reverence.
My wild heart leaped and laughed. I strove
To reach thee, love,
To seize the flame
And wreathe a garland for thy name.

THE DANCER

THERE 's a shining in the Northlands
Because my lover is there;
It comes from his brow, the heart in his breast,
And from his sun-gold hair.
I am dancing alone in the Southland
Because he is so fair.

When he sailed unto those countries,
Intolerable on their night
Fell the flaming of the leaping
Of his white galley-light:
They knew not in the Northlands
That aught could shine so bright.

And I, nard-scented, silken,
By tropic-fever tossed,

Lay burning, ever burning,
Though I was bound in frost;
For I, ere he had found me,
Though lordly lodged, was lost.

And O, I was anhungered,
And O, they brought me food.
Gold were our fields, yet famine
Raged ever in my blood.
He lived, he shone! I lived not
Till I knew his kinglihood.

And now I dance in the darkness
And in the still noon air;
I dance in a dream at midnight
With a jewel in my hair;
My sandals crush the almond-blooms
Because he is so fair!

LOVE IS A TERRIBLE THING

I WENT out to the farthest meadow,
I lay down in the deepest shadow;

And I said unto the earth, "Hold me,"
And unto the night, "O enfold me,"

And unto the wind petulantly
I cried, "You know not for you are free!"

And I begged the little leaves to lean
Low and together for a safe screen;

Then to the stars I told my tale:
"That is my home-light, there in the vale,

"And O, I know that I shall return,
But let me lie first mid the unfeeling fern.

"For there is a flame that has blown too near,
And there is a name that has grown too dear,
And there is a fear" . . .

And to the still hills and cool earth and far sky
I made moan,
"The heart in my bosom is not my own!

"O would I were free as the wind on wing;
Love is a terrible thing!"

THE HEART-SONG OF JACINTA

Part of my heart goes wailing down
As a ship goes down at sea;
As an Indian woman goes to her own
When the death-fire sets her free.
Part of my heart has the tiger-pace —
Wolf-wild, fox-far, it hunts thy face,
To tear from the distance, to dare to wear
Again on my breast a space.

Part of my heart sits smiling, still,
Within its sealèd wall;
And counts the treasures in its till
And the little memories all,
That crowd with thy honey-lips, thine eyes,
Till part of my heart in rapture cries,
"Delay thy coming, love, yet a while,
These I would realize."

Part of my heart, a joyous whole,
(Though thou art all in all)
Is fated for love as the lily's bowl
Is fated for dews that fall.
Part of my heart, dear love, shall stir
To the sound of the foot of the wayfarer
Who brings the ends of the earth in his eyes—
Ah, love me and leave me, sir!

Part of my heart with curious mien,
Slow turns away to its task;
Let the wild thrush sing when its mate is seen,
Let the wild dove brood in the dusk:
Part of my heart is woman no more;
Part of my heart was human before
The days of its longing and laughter and love,
Ere it sat by the silent door.

Part of my heart, part of my heart—
'T is strange that this should be;

Petal on petal, yet ever apart,
And all of the heart of me!
So now I turn from the sealèd door
And do the task that I loved before,
And part of my heart is free, is free —
The part that is woman no more!

FLAME SONG

I was a flame, I was a flame,
That danced too hotly bright;
I hurt his heart, I seared his soul,
I sealèd up his sight.

I was a flame, I was a flame —
O fire of me that raved
And lapped at all bright food of fire,
Anhungered and aggrieved.

O flame of me, O flame of me,
That leaped into his skies!
Ahi! Aghast at their great height
I entered Paradise.

I entered and my dancing ceased —
(A flame might die to live!)

Heaven, quench not utterly to ash
For light I still would give.

A flame might die as souls have died
When they would live again;
A flame might live as souls have lived
That on the heights were slain.

A torch, a taper, O sweet Heaven,
A little far-off mark,
A gleam, a glow, I would be so,
For comfort in his dark;

A torch, a taper, O sweet Heaven,
A star within his skies,
Far from the flaming of my greed
When thou unseal his eyes!

BALM

Did you hurt me?
I do not know;
I heard a little song
Come and go.

Shall you hurt me?
You fear so?
Ah never doth music
Cease to flow.

WILD LOVE

Far, far, far,
Wild love, bear me far!
Ranging storm shall be our steed,
Where the lightnings lead.

Hot and fleet and far,
Past the utmost bar!
Thou nor I shall curb his speed:
Distance is our need.

Out and out — afar!
Fallen our futures are!
Thou nor I shall give them heed —
Chaos for our creed.

Wilder and more far!
Wild love, touch thy star!
Fire into my lips then read . . .
Ashes be thy meed.

TO ESCLARMONDO

If thou couldst walk alone with thought,
Alone within the day,
Between thy soul and Heaven naught
To shadow thy white way:

If thou couldst walk alone with dreams,
Without the cloud of me —
My sudden storms, my fitful gleams,
My poor reality:

If thou couldst walk alone with light —
Would then thine eyes see true?
And were there thus a higher height
For thee, a rapture new?

Cloud, I would melt in willing tears,
Storm, I would gladly go

Forth from thy peace through all the years,
If thou wert safer so.

But ah, who walks with thought alone?
Who is there knows but light?
And who with naught but dreams has grown
To that desiréd height?

THE WAVE

A WAVE runneth through my blood,
Yea, a wild wave lifteth me
From his breast, my deep, my sea,
To his lips, O Height-of-flood!

A wave runneth through my tide;
Set free on a far-off main
By the breath of a joy that is pain,
A wave bounded forth and cried:

"Let me break, let me break at last,
Flame on a burning strand!
Foam on the lips of a land
That hath not any past."

I am lifted, O wild wave,
I know thy voice in me,

The compelling ecstasy—
None shall stay me, none shall save,

For I break, I break at last,
Foam on his heart's wild strand;
Here lieth the flaming land
That hath not any past!

I MOVE IN MISTS OF DREAM

I MOVE in mists of dream,
Dream-bonds are on my hands,
Shadow-shod I seem,
Enmeshed in silver strands
Woven on the looms of dream,
In dim dream-distant lands.

Is there a day to come?
I would have no more days.
Threshold of my heart's home
Shall stay them on their ways;
Beneath my dream's white dome
His weary head Time lays.

O Sower of the Seed,
I have no horizon
Save where dream-rush and reed

Wave o'er this memory won,
The perished fragrant deed
I harvest now, undone.

Master of my delight,
Lord of this memory,
Thou camest in the night,
Even now thou callest me,
Even now I lift the light,
Trembling in ecstasy.

O lips and hands of flame —
Will the spell never end?
Life calls and without shame
Life with my dream I blend.
I move in mists of dream,
Dream-doves my ways attend.

IRINA

Because it is so cold and gray
I dream wine and the south.
Because I love no man on earth
I dream of your warm mouth.

How I would touch my glass to yours!
How golden it would ring!
Because of the bleakness and the gray
I let it thrill and sting,

The song that from your heart would fly
When I had touched its core
With warmth of mine and wine of mine—
O your heart's waiting door!

Because I love you not, nor yet
Would feel your hand o'er mine,
I dare this play in a drear day,
With dream-warmth and dream-wine.

SIMONETTE

Yesterweek I loved thee;
Yestermorn I rose,
Said, "Take back thy token,
Thy red ring unbroken,
Now I would be free."

I was free of loving —
(World, O wondrous world!)
But no woman knoweth
Whence the mad wind bloweth,
Ne'er should boast her free.

Yesterweek I loved thee;
Now I love again!
Life o' Love, how dare I?
Love o' life, what care I?
Pray, what meaneth free?

Freedom was a stranger
Come to dance a round;
When I clasped him, turning,
He was another burning
Lover — like to thee!

LIFE OF LOVE

I HAD to sit and watch it die,
A little love that longed to live;
That had no right to live,
Since all its ill-starred birth could give
Was heritage of pain and sigh.

Could I but save it, were there wine
And food to offer: bread for love
And wine for the heart of love.
Some poison that fine pulse might move,
But wine? There's naught save blood of mine.

My blood! Then love, which of us dies?
My first strong bit of loving, O
'T is hard to see you go,
To see the fire fade and so
Myself to lean and close your eyes.

YEA AND NAY

O THE nay that I would say thee,
The red, the ringing nay,
Knew I the way to sway thee
To beg me yield a yea!

O the nay that I would say thee,
The flaming flagrant nay!
For well, O well I weigh thee,
Beneath this moon of May.

And well I know to stay thee,
From day to dreamy day,
Were one way to betray thee
And were one way to slay.

'Neath hedgerows thou shouldst lay thee,
Forever and ever stray!

O the nay that I must say thee,
Beneath this moon of May!

O mad proud youth, I pray thee,
Why dost thou still delay —
Against thy will delay thee
From day to dreamy day?

O the yea that I could say thee,
The warm, the wingèd yea!
Nay, never will I betray thee —
Go thou, go thou thy way.

"THIS IS MY LOVE FOR YOU"

I HAVE brought the wine
And the folded raiment fine,
Pilgrim staff and shoe —
This is my love for you.

I will smooth your bed,
Lay away your coverlid,
Sing the whole day through.
This is my love for you.

Mayhap in the night,
When the dark beats back the light,
I shall struggle too . . .
This is my love for you.

In your dream, once more,
Will a star lead to my door?
To stars and dreams be true!
This is my love for you . . .

FAITHFULNESS

This is my flitting heart,
In a boundless world, apart,
This is my heart, no less.
All day the wild thing wingeth
And singeth of faithfulness:
This is my heart,
Wouldst thou cage it?
Then cage it with faithfulness.

O this is my ranging heart,
True love for its only chart,
All paths it doth possess
As ever wind-wide it wingeth,
Still sure of thy dear caress.
This is my heart,
Wouldst thou cage it?
Then cage it with faithfulness.

O, a falcon fleet for a heart,
For its leash thy taming art,
Bearing thy bell and jess —
When farthest it fleeth it bringeth
Most praise to thy faithfulness.
This is my heart,
Thou hast caged it
With freedom and faithfulness!

A FAREWELL

Thy breath upon my spirit
Is more than I can bear.
Thou seest me shrink before it,
Knowing thee most fair,
Yet — breathe not on my spirit,
Nor touch not now my hair.

Draw not thy web around me.
Thy delicate desire,
The scented mesh that bound me,
Hath flamed, a wall of fire,
To madden me, to wound me,
To stifle and to tire.

As avalanche, as thunder,
It blasts me, yet not blind,
I rise and rive asunder

The magic chains — my mind,
Knowing thee fair, Fair Wonder,
Doth know thee still unkind.

Yet ever subtle, fragrant,
Thy beauty doth remain . . .
Though wildly free, love's vagrant,
I quit the courts of pain,
Through some betrayal flagrant,
I turn to thee again.

O Torturer, deliver
My life into my hands!
My heart is with the river,
Flowing through many lands.
It turns not back forever:
Farewell, O golden sands.

VON EWIGER LIEBE

You say there is no love, my love,
Unless it lasts for aye?
O folly, there are interludes
Better than the play.

You say lest it endure, sweet love,
It is not love for aye?
O blind! Eternity can be
All in one little day.

MAJESTIC HAWK

Majestic hawk, we watched thee soar and
circle in the sky,
Thou and thy mate, he whom I love and I.
We watched thee soar and mount and spire,
high and more high.

Majestic hawk, he whom I love sees further
in heaven than I.
He saw thee, far and free — lost, lost on
high —
When I saw only thy mate beating against
the sky.

Then the wild, wild wishes of our hearts,
they sprang, they too must fly,
And straight they flew till his was lost in the
sky . . .
But my wish was the mate of his wild wish
on high.

SONG OF THE SUM OF ALL

I HAVE loved many, the more and the few —
I have loved many that I might love you.

All of my life was but loving and proving,
The near and the far, the constant, the roving,

The sad and the joyous, the shadow, the part,
With signs of their lacking marked down in
my heart.

For never the goal and the whole were for me ;
They were handle and hint, they were crutch,
they were key,

They were bramble and bud but never the
flower,
They were dawn, they were dusk, nor ever
noon hour.

They were soil-of-life, spoil-of-life, symbol
and clue,
But the soul-of-life, whole-of-life waited for
you;

They were wave, they were tide, they were
shade on the lea,
But you are the earth and the sun and the sea.

L'ENVOI

Now all my songs are over.
  Arise and latch thy door
And sing them to thy lover
  And say them o'er and o'er.
Mayhap thou wilt discover
  That thou canst love him more.

And when the charm is over,
  Arise, unlatch thy door,
And fare forth from thy lover,
  Although it wound thee sore . . .
Mayhap he will discover
  He might have loved thee more. . . .

MANY MEN

To Nasidika

To clothe thy life with brilliancy
And honor is to give
Joy to the Gods: they love to see
How pleasantly men live;
They love the crowned and fragrant head
But turn their face away
From those who come ungarlanded. . . .

MICHAEL FIELD.

Lo, to some 't was given
By lightest touch to invoke
A music heard of Heaven,
Truths by angels spoke.

Heat have they to inflame
Worlds with their least fire.
What of those who dream,
Unlit save for desire?

Longing for their lute,
Love alone for lamp:
Hark — songs of the mute!
See — wealth of a tramp!

O desire, my gift,
O desire, my goad,
Thou at last shalt lift
This desire, my load.

THE LOVER OF THE LILY

The lover of the lily, the lover of the rose,
Came once unto my secret, my scented garden-close.

I filled his hands with lilies, slender, perfumed, rare;
The lover of the lily hath white hands lily-fair.

From garden unto garden he goeth and we give
Into his hands red roses, white lilies while we live.

I chid my hands: Nay, give not! Save ye for one unfed.
(For beauty of the lilies, it is the soul's fair bread.)

I chid my heart: Ah, give not! Behold he surfeiteth,
And some there be that hunger, even unto death.

My lilies made me answer and my few roses frail:
Bread of the soul, white Beauty, veiled Host and Holy Grail,

Flower of the soul, white Beauty, wine of the soul are we,
Alone to him who seeth our beauty, born of thee.

For some there be that hunger — (white lilies bloom again), —
And know not that they hunger, though they are blind with pain.

But one there is that seeth, beside thy garden-
close :
The lover of the lily, the lover of the
rose.

LIRON TO LALAGE

All of heaven was blue,
Lalage, because of you ;
What you saw I sought,
Doom and dream forgot.

O fair world !
Blue morn to me no beauty brings :
Mine eyes see only inward things.

Shrill sang each bird.
Lalage, I heard, I heard,
When your cry of glee
Cut and quickened me !

O fair world !
Yet not for me light song, whirred wings :
Mine ears hear only inward things.

Lilies flung a snare:
Lalage, I was aware!
Roses breathed through you,
Rue you taught me too . . .

O fair world!
No more for me earth's censer swings:
I'm wooed again by inward things.

I return to dream;
Lalage, I leave the gleam.
Lily, rue and rose —
I am free of those.

O fair world
Of hints and tints and heart-burnings!
O lost and saved by inward things!

I SHUT thy face away within thy book.
I can no longer bear thy sombre eyes,
Imperious, passionate, sad — so sad, so wise.
Too many lives are living in thy look,
Too many hands beneath those hands have shook.
I cannot bear the fumes of pain that rise
From thine old ardent Eastern memories:
I shut thy face away within thy book.

Would thus thine eyes might close. Too-living still,
By temple, caravan and teak-forest,
O Desert-Star, Aziza, Yasmini —
Desire — thou burnest ever without rest,
Though rest thou 'st sought with all thy weary will,
Bidding the River bear thee out to sea.

A LAMENT OF YASMINI

God made me in an idle hour,
A chalice fit for wine alone,
O would that he had made a flower,
A wandering planet, or a stone.

O would he had not pleasured him,
Dallying, that day among the days,
To mould the cup's curved perfect rim,
That soon the red wine should upraise.

Alas, wan in the waning light,
The wine that to his gaze was given.
The cup was full of tears. . . . That night
God wept upon the throne of Heaven.

HELEN

I HAVE no heart for Heaven
Since Helen is not there,
I have come to long for Helen
And for her golden hair.

I must go search in Hades,
And if that shadowy place
Knoweth not Helen's music
Nor holdeth Helen's face,

I will lie undemurring
Beneath the olive-tree,
Assured at last that Helen
Shareth the soil with me.

For Agnes Baldwin
who gave me a
Greek lamp.

MAD MARY

Dusk came out of the wood and found the
croft where I lay.
Lips as bright as the morning and eyes like
the stars of night,
I dreamed of the morn of the morrow and
midnight's dark delight.
Dusk covered my heart, all with her sleeve of
gray.

Dusk covered my lips: O morning veiled
alway.
Dusk dimmed mine eyes: now one are noon
and night.
Dusk entered my dream and dulled my dear
delight.
Dusk in my heart, dusk for my hope, over
the hills I stray.

THE HEIR

'T was a cold, cold day
In a bleak little town
By a barren bay
Where the wind swept down.
'T was drear and 't was lonely
And I was the only
Guest at the poor
Little inn on the moor.

'T was a long, long way
From my high castle-home;
There was no one to say
The road I had come,
Nor why I sat lonely
And silent, the only
Guest at the poor
Little inn on the moor.

There was no one to say
How I drank, how I sighed,
Far away, far away,
From Power and from Pride.
O, 't was good to be lonely
And free — and the only
Guest at the poor
Little inn on the moor!

THE STRANGER

All through the village we are still;
We wait for him to pass.
In the white villa on the hill
They turn and turn the glass.

He is a stranger — fair, they say,
And young. The young should live!
The beautiful, the strong, the gay
Deep into life should dive

And breast its waves and buoyant swim!
Alas, he drifts to port;
Another current carries him
Beyond the billow-sport,

Beyond the harbor, past the hill,
Beneath the churchyard grass . . .
All through the village we are still;
We wait for him to pass.

THE DREAM LEA

We would go forth unto a land of dreams,
For we are weary of the things of day.
We would find meads that ne'er have been —
Songs that shall never be, beside those streams
We'd softly sing alway.

There move and whirl and be at rest. The same
And one these three will be. For we shall sign
Our weariness away, to wreathe
Forgotten flowers and wear an old strange name,
Quaffing a stranger wine.

There heavy arms lift lightly to a wind
That binds a body swift and light as he;
There heavy heart allays its wound;

There heavy head is crowned with dusk-
flowers, twined
In hair held cloudily.

Sweet loves and sisters wait in this dim lea;
Shy creatures friend us on the faery way;
With sighs, enchanted lips unknown
Kiss out the mark and lull the memory
Of our far mortal day.

POETS

They had great wealth of golden dreams.
We begged them of their store —
The singing gods — for coin of dreams
Is golden words' outpour.

To one they gave of their largesse.
O fair he spread his board!
O there I've supped his cup to bless
With many a laughing lord.

Sure one lies buried 'neath his gift;
From one they did withhold;
And one sits doubting if to lift
His single coin of gold.

To me was sparely, sparely given
And I spend freely — O!

To buy me little clouds of heaven
To curtain my window;

To fit a caravan so fleet
'T will cross the desert skies,
That I may dip my dancing feet
In yestermorn's sunrise!

O WORLD, BE NOT SO FAIR

From the German of Maria Jäger

O MOON, O hide thy golden light,
  O night, be not so fair;
O ye dear stars, shine not so bright:
  I would for sleep prepare.
Mine eyes are closing wearily
  That watched the slow day's flight,
And yet there is no rest for me
  In this enchanted night.

O fellow-men, be not too good!
  O world, be not too fair!
Wake no new life-glow in my blood —
  I would for sleep prepare.
My day is dim; there beckons clear
  A star of other air;
And yet, and yet, my heart is here!
  O world, be not so fair.

IN THE ROOM

To O-Lu-Si San

Sans miel, sans fiel,
Ma belle âme danse.

JULES LAFORGUE.

These are my moments. O I would
Thou knewest the sisterhood.
Child of their mood
I dream and dance and sing and sigh,
While their feet flit by.
I lift a white brow to their kiss,
Child of their bliss.
I cry out quick beneath their bane,
Child of their pain.
I drink unto the lees
(*And I would die to utter these!*)
Their passionate griefs and ecstasies.

UNANSWERED

O I HAVE closed so many doors,
O I have closed so many, many doors.

But secret hands slide all the bolts
And silent feet glide o'er my floors;
Eyes come betwixt mine and the sun —
Who are the leaders of these strange revolts?

Behold, they are my Questions and they cry,
"Unanswered I, unanswered I — and I —!"
Unanswered every one.

Yet I have closed so many doors,
So many, many doors.

MYSTERY

I

Blessed and Accursed, none knows where thou dost dwell,
Nor if they live, who, winning to thy shrine,
Cry on thy name and make thy secret sign,
Find thee and see thee and still have thee well.
None hears their word and there is none can tell.
Even I who bring thee daily tears and wine,
I have not found thee, nay, thou art not mine,
Though I kneel oft at bidding of thy bell.

Once I had touched and all but clasped thy hand;
Once I believed it was thy lips I kissed;
Thy mouth was mirage and thy feet were sand!
Yet will I run beside thee all day long,

Cloak me at noontide in thy silver mist,
And weave thy web and sing all day thy song.

II

And they, even they, who 'neath the noonday sun
Pluck the red fruit and laugh and slay the wheat
And bind its gold and tread the grape and eat
Their bread and say, "Now is our day well done";
Even they are acolytes of thee, who shun
Thy name nor follow thy dusk-faring feet,
Nor ever, O thou Awful and Most Sweet,
Dreaming and singing to thy bosom run.

Ay, thou dost weave them though they weave not thee.
White and rose-red, with laughter, tears and sighs,

They move within thee and they are not
free,
They wear thee though they tear thy veils
impearled,
And trample them. But I, more subtly
wise,
I dare thee, draw thee, trembling, round my
world.

III

Then come unto the chamber of my heart.
There thou shalt find thy doves and thou
shalt find
The flame, the fruit, the flagon, and shalt
mind
The curtained couch and thy still niche apart
And all the holy silence of thy art;
And kneeling, captive, rapt, devout, resigned
Unto thy service, so thou loose or bind,
My heart, and evermore my kneeling heart.

Then come unto the chamber of my soul.
There is thy throne, majestic Mystery.
There thy choirs chant thee and thy great
bells toll
Thee and thy ascending incense is the breath
Of life, thy prayer the anguished ultimate
cry —
O Hid and Dread, O Door of Life and Death!

THE FLEEING FLAME

I would give lessons in rapture
And teach you the scale of desire,
Till the dream that you trace and would capture
Shall be as a flame of white fire

To blind and elude till you languish
And cry for cessation of pain,
And cry for a truce to the anguish
Of a dream that is restless and vain.

And then I would touch you and teach you
The sin of the sorrow of men
Who desire without dream, I would reach you
With lust of the lair and the den;

Till the bloom of your bright lips shall wither
And you cry that desire should be still,

And you pray me to lead your feet whither
White peace hath uttered her will.

Then will I reveal in my pity
The peace that men have upon earth —
Her they seek in the streets of the city,
Desiring through forest and firth,

Till you cry out and flout me, deriding
The heart of her I call peace,
Having learnt that no peace is abiding
Till dream and desire shall cease;

Till you rise to follow your rapture —
Pale dream and ruddy desire —
Though you know that 't is never to capture
The fleeing flame of white fire!

MOOD

Were it melted into music
  Would a soul go pure of stain?
Voiced by viols should our weeping
  Sound a silver strain?
Bodied in a flute's outflowing
  Might a grief elude its pain,
Fault and flaw and scar and blemish
  Healed in song again?

Nay, alas! My soul sought music:
  The high flute sobbed out her pain,
And the viols' dark despairing
  Was my soul's refrain.

HIDE ME FROM HATE

So now, Calais, thou givest me choice,
In thy soft voice,
To go forth lonely unto despair —
(My soul could never lie there!) —
Or to hate thee well, to wait
And wrong thee with cold hate.

I have seen Hate; I know her hands
That burn like fire-brands.
I have seen Hate; I know her feet
That lurk where murderers meet.
I have seen Hate; I know her brow
Might be my bulwark now.

Were there but two ways for my choice,
As saith thy voice,
I would go lonely unto despair!
(My soul could never lie there.)

I 'd clamor at her gate,
Crying, " Hide me from Hate ! "

I have seen Hate; I know her hands
That burn like fire-brands.
I have seen Hate; I know her hair,
Snare worse than all despair.
I have seen Horror! By the dark gate
I cry, " Hide me from Hate ! "

A PRAYER TO AN OLD GOD

To Vulcan's hut show me the way,
Unto his furnace red.
Upon his anvil I would lay
My heavy heart of lead.

Vulcan, Vulcan, hast thou fire
And will thy fire suffice
To melt mine anger and mine ire,
The iron and the ice?

And is thine arm strong as of old,
If fire fail to break
Stone and steel, seeking for gold,
Fair gold for my soul's sake?

Vulcan, lame and terrible,
Of metals such as these

A strong shield didst thou once weld well
For kingly Achilles.

Terrible and lame, a god,
Driveth my desire.
By Heaven's heights that he hath trod,
Have pity on me, Sire!

Melt me, Master, mould me, wield
Thy hammer, make me whole!
Make my heart into a shield
For my faltering soul.

IOLÉ

I LONG for white lilies,
White roses and rest,
White raiment and silence
Like a dove's white breast.

Thy faun came too near me,
(Well loved I the dance),
My garland he blighted
With his ribald glance.

Thy faun danced too wildly,
His wreath was awry,
His pipe was discordant,
Too harsh was his cry.

I yearn for white raiment:
My garland so gay

I 've plucked at in horror
And flung far away.

I long for white lilies,
I ask to be still.
O silence, his singing
Come, cover and kill!

THE PENITENT

I WILL come back and be a child
And put away from me
The daring and the dancing wild,
The dreams that troubled thee.

I will come back and softer sing
And tell thee stories true,
And make thee many a lovely thing
From out our drouth and dew.

But when thou sleepest I will run
And dance upon the sward
And tell the moon how I have won
Thy praise for my reward:

And tell the moon how I must stay
A child, and dream no more

Such dreams as I have sought to say,
That tempted me so sore:

And tell the moon and tell the night
How I have put from me —
All day — until the dim twilight —
The dreams that troubled thee.

THE SORROWFUL

I WAKENED when the dawn-white
Was flooding mead and moor,
I wakened with the bird-calls,
A thrush beside my door.

I wakened with the dawn-white,
Yet sprang not from my bed,
For the sin of all my sorrow
Was heavy on my head.

I could not go to greet her,
The Fair, the Perfect One,
For the sin of all my sorrow
Was cloud against her sun:

The stain of my great sadness,
My grief heavy and gray,
Yea, the sin of all my sorrow,
It held me from the Day.

WORLD-WEARY

I WOULD follow the fading light
To the silent shore of the sea,
And there for a night and another night,
None should come nigh to me.

And if one came who would know my name,
My wish would carry me far,
To the heart of the coldest faintest flame
Of the last and loneliest star.

And there for a day and another day,
My soul, wrapped in white fire
To keep the questioning world away,
Would drink of her desire.

For she is fain of rest, her feet
Move not to music or mirth;

Far solitude seemeth more sweet
Than any joy of earth. . . .

But O, I know, on another morn
My soul will arise and say,
"World, I desire thee, flower and thorn!
Show me the homeward way!"

RENAISSANCE

Inquisition came to me,
Rack and screw and cell;
I was living Renaissance,
Spring it was as well.

Inquisition came as friend:
"Friend of mine, reveal
Past and pathway, torch and tool,
For my cross and seal."

I had naught but my young joy,
Dancing in my eyes,
And my world-old true desire,
Beating through my sighs.

I had friendly hand for friend
And a greeting rare;

For the rack I had no creed,
For the screw no prayer.

Inquisition read the doom
Of my young delight —
(Excommunicate of sin
And the ancient blight!) —

Cursed and went. . . . And I am young,
And I have forgot.
I am living Renaissance;
Spring it is, I wot!

ABSENT

I DID not know that I had lived
The little tedious day,
For I was sleeping till the noon
Had chased the morn away,

And then I rose and crept about,
All in my robe of blue,
But never heard how soft it trailed,
Nor never felt its hue,

Nor scarcely saw the purple grapes
Upon the silver dish,
But only stood and could not think
And could not even wish.

O not to know that I had lived —
It was to lose the day!

And in the loss to lie benumbed,
To lose the loss that way,

A curious anguish without pain,
From which at last a Word,
Born out of nowhere, brought me back —
On bright wings, like a bird.

FEAR–BRED

I WOULD have loved to tell you true,
O cruel lips, O cold blue eyes.
I could not for my fear of you
And so I told you lies.

You were my little world. And then
The great world came, with wider skies.
Alas, fear-bred, I feared all men,
And so I told them lies.

I made a hedge about my heart,
I made a high bright house of lies;
I kept my white soul there apart,
Safe-shielded from their eyes.

But well I wish one might come near,
Whose eyes would look into mine eyes,

And bid me lay aside my fear
And lay aside my lies.

For I would love to tell you true,
O unknown lips, O wide blue skies!
I cannot for my fear of you,
And so I tell you lies.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND

My friend, my kind friend,
I am writing you at the day's end,
Out of my solitude.
To-day I went up to the wood
And at dawn I am going again,
For I heard a cry there, as of one in pain.
O I heard a little shaken sob,
A faint shivering thrilling throb,
And I knew, I knew 't was a buried brook,
Though I could not stop or look.
So at dawn I will rise and go and find
The brook. I will go with the thought of you in my mind.
I will part the violets, the wood's little daughters,
I will lift the leaves and release the waters.

I will lift the leaves and tear the old roots
apart,
As once you lifted dead leaves and old roots
from my heart.

For H. B. D.

HEART'S HOLIDAY

Without, a city's whirling dust,
A city's alley-wall;
Without, a bleak pale strip of sky,
Within, high festival.

Without, no greeting between friends,
From the hurrying crowd no smile.
Within, my heart's slow pageant moves
In glorious solemn file.

There was no call for revel. Day,
Who summons us each morn,
Came forth in dreariest garb and blew
No gala herald-horn.

But slave of day I am not, nay,
Her mistress still, I wield

The crystal scepter of my mood,
Bearing my dream's white shield.

Exultant, rapture-flooded, mad
With mystic inner mirth,
My heart holds her strange carnival
Unseen of all the earth.

O SLEEP

Take me upon thy breast,
O river of rest.
Draw me down to thy side,
Slow-moving tide.
Carry out beyond reach
Of song or of speech
This body and soul forespent.
To thy still continent,
Where silence hath his home,
Where I would come,
Bear me now in thy deep
Bosom, Sleep,
O Sleep.

A SONG

Now I will make me a song
And make it sweet to the end.
(O gray day, thou art long;
Bitter the way thou dost wend.)

O gray way, thou art long;
O Fate, where bideth my friend?
Now wind the wrong in a song
And make it sweet to the end!

My slender hands, are ye strong?
The rod of Fate would ye bend?
Ye can make but a little song,
So make it sweet to the end.

O the rod, the lash and the thong!
'T is I that must bend, bend!
But O, I will make me a song,
Silver-sweet to the end.

THE WORLD'S CHILD

To Brunoddie

The wrong of unshapely things is a wrong too great to be told.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

My thought was fain to fare
Vague avenues of air
And cloudways lone and wild,
Until it heard a crying child.

Lo, then it fled for balm and food,
For pillow-down and fuel-wood,
For lint to line a sleeping-nest,
For father-heart and mother-breast.
It tore its dream to bandages,
It gave its hope the hurt to dress,
And all the fair words that it knew,
To heal this child it gave them too.

My thought was fain to fare
Vague avenues of air
And cloudways lone and wild,
Until it heard a crying child.

SICK–LEAVE

I MUST take the road by the river
  Since you exile me again;
I must take the road by the river—
  O my wonderful river of men!

I will find the path to the mountain—
  (O mountain of mankind!)
To shield me from the silence
  I would ride in a calling wind

That shall be as my calling comrades
  Who bear now my strength's arrears;
I must climb away to the sunrise,
  For I dream of their white careers.

High in these valleys a lake lies,
  And high and more deep in my heart

Lies my love for the life of the living —
O why must I ride apart?

I will take the road by the river
Since you exile me again,
But 't is only a sign forever
Of my wonderful river of men.

ALLEGRA AGONISTES

A GLEAM of gold in gloom and gray,
A call from out a fairer day.
O pang at heart and ebbing blood!
(Hush, bread and salt should be thy mood,
Stern woman of the Brotherhood.)

Clamor of golden tones and tunes,
Hint of faint horns, breath of bassoons:
They wound my soul again, I lie
Face earthward in fresh agony.
O give me joy before I die!

World, world, I could have danced for thee
And I had tales and minstrelsy.
Kept fairer I had been more good —
(Hush, bread and salt should be thy mood,
Soul of the breadless Brotherhood.)

Some thou hast formed to play thy part,
The bold, the cold, the hard of heart.
Thy rue upon my lips, I toss;
Rose was my right. O world, the loss,
When Greek limbs writhe upon the cross!

THE QUEST

'T is I went a-questing,
Unhasting, unresting,
To where the birds were nesting,
  Seeking of the Way.

And O and O, the eagles,
The orioles, the doves,
They love, they hate, yet learn not
From their red hates and loves.

For far lies the heart's land,
Her high-land, her holy-land,
And far lies the soul's land,
  And far lies the Way.

I listened to the lilies —
They had no tale to tell;

The little leaves, the stately sheaves,
Were ignorant as well.

And all through the tree-land,
The forest-land, the free-land,
And all along the sea-land,
No one could say.

The moon it had no meaning,
The stars were sterile too,
The will-less winds go wandering,
They know not what they do.

And though I searched the sear-land
The desert-land, the drear-land,
And passed unto the mere-land,
My feet were astray.

I came unto my brother:
He cried aloud my name!

Across the dark that bound us
He flashed his signal-flame.

For he was the heart's-land,
Her high-land, her holy-land,
O he was the soul's land,
And he was the Way!

OF PRISONERS

My heart is breaking. O why can I not break
yours?
My heart is breaking because of prisoners.
O the terrible walls of stone!
O the hours and the months and the days
And Despair!
We laugh; we go our ways,
And they wait in their cells alone.
The cells are of steel and stone.
They sit and stare,
They curse, they weep,
And their souls die.
(O ask not a soul to live without light!)
And we go our ways and work and sleep
And sing, and we see the sky
And count it a little thing and cry
"Keep them hid from our sight!"

For we deem they have done us a wrong.
For a wrong, O what is the price?
Alas, alas, what anguish will suffice?
And how long lasts the payment, how long?
O I dream at night of the iron doors
And my heart is breaking. Why can I not
break yours?

THE HALLS OF SHAME

One whispered as we read the name,
"O hasten, flee the Halls of Shame!"

But O, my bitter soul would know;
It hath no faith in name or show.

And so I climbed the gilded stair
And clasped hot hands that met mine there

And kissed pale lips I might have loved
And read mad eyes, sad eyes, and proved

That they who tread the Halls of Shame
Are blackened, blackened by the name;

For O, my bitter soul stood last
Within the shadow that it cast.

TO CRUSH THE BUTTERFLY

A FRAGILE flower the soul,
A butterfly on wing;
Yet daily earth's dark powers enroll
To bruise the tender thing.

O Hunger, Hunger, would
The soul were fed of air;
But no, it needs a body's food,
The soul so frail and fair.

Behold, armies are drawn
Out of the fertile lands;
They break their camps at break of dawn
And battle on the sands.

And souls are spilt like wine
And none the reason knows,
Save Greed who lurks where souls resign
Their kinship to be foes.

O Hunger, Hunger, would
The soul were fed of air;
'T is led unto the trough of Greed
To feed the body there.

Behold, navies are brought
From out the hearts of hills;
Ploughing sea-furrows they have wrought
The famine of our tills.

Famine — and farmers gone
Upon the barren sea!
Then souls are sold before the dawn
Unto new slavery.

O Hunger, Hunger, would
The soul were fed of air;
But no, it needs a body's food,
The soul so frail and fair.

And lo, prisons and priests
And olden creeds of man,
Conspirators at separate feasts,
They end what war began.

And though great wealth belies
The clamor of the poor,
'T is hunger e'er doth neutralize
The hope that 's at our door.

O Hunger, Hunger, would
The soul were thing of air;
For Greed hath fanned a bitter feud
'Twixt soul and soul so fair.

Behold, great kings break plight,
Great teachers falsify:
Terrific powers of earth unite
To crush the butterfly!

A CHAMPION OF TO-DAY

The heart of the city cries through me
(Her heart that 's a million hearts of men),
Of her woeful need I may not be still,
Though I am torn by her terrible will,
Burn with her burning, her waste fulfill,
Worn with her malady.

The mind of the city gropes in me,
(Her mind that 's a million minds of men)
And I strive alone in the market-place
To find the meaning of each drawn face,
The trend of her hope, through tears to trace
(Her hope cries bitterly).

And the soul of the city, aflame to be free,
(Her soul that 's a million souls of men)
Cries, "The god of gold asks a heavy toll!"

And I cry, "Though gold be thy goad, O
soul,
O it is not a god and it is not the goal!
Heart 's joy thy goal must be."

PATHFINDERS

We are making a new trail,
New heights we assail;
No traveler e'er has tried
This mountain-side.

We are making a new trail:
(Hark, hear the wind wail!)
Nay, no leader he can be,
A follower he.

Nor can the stars tell
If we go safe and well,
Nor the trees nor the tall fern
Where we should turn.

Naught that the wise know
Our pathway can show,

Nor what their gods write,
Safety invite.

We are making a new trail.
Do we then fear to fail —
Thou and I? How may we know
Which way to go?

Dream doth drive us and hot hope,
Through the fearful mists we grope,
And we mount, we mount, but O —
No more we know.

CHILD, CHILD

CHILD, child,
The city alleys reek;
By night-time and by daytime
The passing engines shriek,
And murky is the Maytime
Where carriers hoot and cry,
Yet here thou hast thy playtime
And hast thy lullaby.

Child, child,
Men say and poets sing,
"Thy hope of joy, O Woman,
Lies in this single thing.
Of life or love, let no man
Tell thee ought else were best:
Thy joy of joys, O Woman,
Thy child upon thy breast."

Child, child,
Alas, and if it be?
Why sing the joy of mothers
And sing no song of thee?
Who clamors now for others,
Rose-happed though they should lie,
He has not seen thy brothers,
Nor heard thy lullaby.

Child, child,
Some say thou 'rt doomed to fail;
They cry we do not need thee,
So puny, piteous, pale,
And staying not to feed thee
They wait their darling's kiss.
O lest they hear or heed thee
Let them not boast their bliss!

O HUSH, MY HEART

O HUSH, my heart, while I recall
The rosy-footed years
When I had no heart at all,
Only quick smiles and tears.
O sweet it was and safe it was
And O I would I were
Still running with white dreams that pass
Like clouds across the air.

O hush, my heart, while I recall
The silent-sandaled days
When I had no heart at all,
Only my soul's white ways.
O sweet it was and very strange
To find a white soul so;
O would that I again might range,
Heartless, her fields of snow.

O would I had no heart at all!
For O, the stormy hour
When my hot heart rose to a call,
Bearing a crimson flower.
Alas, my soul's wide wanderings,
My limitless desire!
Now all my dreams have heavy wings
And hover round a fire.

Now all my world is made of hands
That cling to mine again,
And I am bound with iron bands
Of passion and of pain.

THE SISTER OF THE WIND

To Margarita Mystica

Destroyer and preserver; hear, O hear!

SHELLEY.

The wind hath been thy memory,
O mortal, O man.
Clad on with clay thou cam'st, but he
Naked before thee ran.

The wind doth hold thy mystery.
Even as thy soul, even so,
Whither he listeth, bloweth he,
And as thy soul, doth go.

The wind weaveth thy destiny.
O lay down thy lyre!
Thou art the lyre. To play on thee
He sweeps through fields of fire!

I

This was the secret of my mind:
That I was made Sister to the Wind.

O I seemed a woman in my ways;
I sang for men's praise or dispraise;

I spun, I wove unto their will;
Yet ever calling over the hill

And through the forest, from the sea,
I heard the voice of one more free,

Of one heart-brother unto me.

II

Bar the doors, he calls again.
(Ye would hold my hands in vain.)
Bar the doors, make fast the chain —
He is calling low.

Bind me, but think not to still
This wild heart or this wild will;
Bind, if ye would keep me till
He shall moan and go.

Bring the lights; watch me askance;
Bar the doors and bid me dance,
Forward, backward, in a trance
Swaying to and fro.

All my days a trance I deem,
All my dancing but a dream.
Wildly, Wind, this heart redeem,
That desires thee so!

Come within the unguarded night,
Shake the earth with thy mad might,
Stay the stars and quench their light —
Seize my hand and go!

III

WHAT is the singing that I hear?
It is thy mother, child.
O no, it is my Brother Wind,
He sings more shrill and wild.

What is the sobbing that I hear?
'T is for thy mother, child.
O no, it is my Brother Wind,
He weeps unreconciled.

For now she sleeps, the sweet white flower,
And happy still, and mild . . .
My Brother Wind cries, cries for me,
The lonely little child.

IV

O MORTAL mother,
Flower of earth,
I would that none other
Had sung since my birth.

I would I had heard not
Hope, white Desire;
I would they had stirred not
Me with white fire.

I would that the Spirit
Knew naught of my clay,
Then might I inherit
Thy beauty, thy way.

Then might I bide me
With thee in earth's breast;
From the wild wind hide me,
And from Unrest.

V

Mayhap I was not mothered
Save in this flower-leaf flesh;
Thus strangely to be brothered —
Caught in the mother-mesh
From blue deep boundless seas of sky,
Where winds float and fly.

Mayhap I was not mothered
Save in this flame-wrought clay;
Thus strangely to be gathered,
Fruit of a wider day,
And poured, an alien unseen wine,
Within this cup of thine.

VI

HEAVEN, hadst thou but given a mother of minds,
Of marvel, of mystery!
Of words of wonder and wandering winds,
Of gloom, of grief, of glee!

Heaven, hadst thou but given a mother of mad
Desire and madder gleams
Of mad mad hopes ne'er to be had —
A mother of these our dreams!

Heaven, hadst thou but given to this my soul,
To song and my soul and me,
A mother — so I be mothered whole,
Even in mine ecstasy!

My lonely brother, my motherless brother,
Far as a star hast thou sped,
Nor know'st thou the tenderness of that mother,
Nor where to lay thy head . . .

VII

She made my body beautiful,
She moulded me as fair
As lilies by a woodland pool,
She tressed my midnight hair,

She bore me to a green hid vale
And laid me in a grove
Of oak and ash, 'mid aspens pale
And lilies of her love.

She kissed my wide and wondering eyes
To make me wonder-blind.
She kissed my lips — O wild and wise —
To save me from the wind.

She kissed my hair, she kissed my heart,
She kissed my hands, she laid
Swift kisses on my feet that start
So swift and unafraid.

She kissed me, O she kissed me, O
She tried to make me hers,
To hush me, hap me, hold me so,
From the White Whisperers.

And I would be hers only now
But that the wild wind came
And kissed me once upon the brow —
O hope, desire and dream!

VIII

But all the songs I bring
Are secret save to thee.
Men must not learn this thing —
To wander fitfully,

To rise and beat the air
And dream in vain of flight.
The world is very fair
And sleep is sweet by night,

And they must reap and sow
And sleep again at last,
Untroubled by the flow
Of wings upon the blast,

Untroubled by the toll
Of startled bells, the cries,
Untroubled by my soul
That storms at last the skies.

IX

I LAY in the meadow
And prayed as I lay
To the lord of the shadow,
The lord of fair day,

The god of white water
And the dark god of earth,
For I am their daughter
And one with my birth

Rose fear of their power,
So fearful I pray
To the gray gods that lower
And the god of fair day.

And then my soul wakened
And spake to its kind.
(Swift beauty betokened
My brother, the Wind.)

And I lay in the meadow
And laughed as I lay,
For he rent the cloud-shadow
From the face of fair day!

X

"Wind-maid, O Wind-maid,
Waken and hearken —
Sore am I afraid.
They have sworn that nine lashes
Be laid on my back;
The sour dame had liefer
I laid on the rack.
They have sworn bread and water
Should punish me well
And the black priest has hinted
O' the hot fires of Hell.
I cried, 'T was the wind
Tore down from the line
The laces so filmy,
The linen so fine!'
I cried, 'T was the wind
Ran through the hedge-gap
With christening-robe
And kerchief and cap.

'T was the wind, 't was the wind!'
Sore was I afraid.
I said not 't was thou,
O mad moody Wind-maid."

XI

HAST thou never heard him, the Harper of Heaven,
Harping and singing and sighing at even?
Hast thou never heard him singing 'neath a star?
Singing and sighing and striving afar?

I have heard him weeping when all sleeping men
Heard not and stirred not and cared not and then
I have heard him calling till I must rise and go,
The calling, the hailing, the wailing hurt me so.

XII

Have pity on all things,
Even on the wind that sings.

Often he feels he is alone,
Hearing his sister moan.

Have pity on the bright restless gay
Leaves; they grow weary, even they.

Have pity on the little waves
That are born in their graves.

Have pity on all souls.
Even those who wear aureoles

And shine and stir and hear the wind —
Even they are bound and blind.

(They too who, hearing, shake with fear,
Knowing not the voice they hear;

They too who turn away
And stop their ears with clay.)

XIII

The wind died
In the dead of the night.
He faltered, sighed,
And ceased outright.
I move, I live—
(I live, they say)—
O gray, gray life
With the wind away.

The wind died.
I took my glass
To the fireside.
Gray breath did pass
Across its gray:
I lived, I knew.
O would I were dead,
Or would the wind blew!

The wind died
And Song died too.

Fear, with his bride,
Gray Terror, grew.
I live, I move,
Like a living thing,
But what is the worth
Of such living?

XIV

O WIND, O wind, from where thou art,
From where the aspen shakes,
Come lullaby my mortal heart,
My mortal heart that breaks.

O wind, from where pale grasses bend,
From where flower-petals fall,
Come rock to rest the dreams that end,
Though they clamor still and call.

O come from where white lilies lie
With silent hearts unstirred.
Thy lullaby, thy chant, thy cry,
Might bring their secret word.

Hush my hurt heart, quench the hot flame,
O heal the anguish of
A strangled hope, a dying dream,
A bleeding mortal love.

XV

It was still on the mountain
When thy storm swept the world.
Fearfully still in the forest where we slept.
Then were white arrows hurled
Upon the air,
And in the hushed hollow where
I had drunk of earth's crystalline flowing fountain,
A torrent lived and leapt!

Thy thunders called thy lightnings, thou didst send
Flame!!
O Wind, thy terrible tribes came!
Thy scourge fell,
Thy lash was laid
On earth that loved thee well.
O Wind, wild Wind, was it the end?
My soul laughed! Lo, I was unafraid!

Then send if thou must thy storm to break
this bitter peace —
(O how shall I find release?)
Sound if thou must thy battle-cry,
Despoil me of my sheaves.
Cleanse!! Purify!!
Break the dead branches, fling forth the dead
leaves!
Scatter the ashes of all the wayside fires!
Scatter the ashes of the old hopes, the old de-
sires!

XVI

I AM dreaming of my homing
Though earth calls home to me;
I am yearning for the turning
Of the wind that sets me free.

For my far home is Forever;
How should I house with clay
Whom the wailing winds are waiting
In their tower of Day-on-Day?

Faithful lovers of the fireside
Lay delaying hands on me,
But my feet would run the heavens
And my soul stir up the sea!

And my heart — it is a wind-harp,
Music, music, o'er and through!
Sorry mortals of a moment,
How can I give it you?

O my frail heart is a wind-harp,
But your pulses cannot know,
Nor your failing breath endure
Its mighty music-flow.

Each in your day you 'll hear it,
(In my boundless day of birth);
I 'll go shrilling past your windows —
You will shrink back to the hearth.

XVII

Wings, wings,
Wide and wild and gray!
Come to me, comfort me, carry me away!
Where the hooded Calms foregather
Hinder not nor hold me, rather
Bend me, send me, a billow out to sea:
I have a heart that longs to be free!

Wings, wings,
I hear ye sweep and sway!
Find me, wind me, waft me away!
That I share the scarlet splendid
Path of Day, with Breadth be blended,
Take me, break me, spill the soul from me!
I have a heart that longs to be free.

XVIII

When I lay within the mire —
(O my soul, white flower of fire) —
When I lay there, broken, stained,
No one knew the wind had waned.

Rise, O Wind, I crave thee! Come
From Heaven's high lit halls, thy home!
Sandal thee and stalk with keen
Sword in thy strong hand unseen!

Rise, O Wind, I crave thee! Call,
Loud through Heaven's high echoing hall!
See, I rise from out the mire!
(O my soul, white flower of fire).

XIX

To be bound so long and now to be free!
(Brother, Brother, hearest thou me?)
The cord is loosened, the arrow sped,
The golden bowl broken, the wild bird fled,
O wild eyrie, to thee!

The clasp of the clay was sealed by a spell;
(Brother, Brother, hearest thou well?)
But a chain for my mind no magic could find
And the wings of my soul were the wings of the wind;
Brother, they bore me to thee!

And now my body lies white on the wave;
(O ivory beauty no wind-wish could save;)
O come, let us sing ere it sinks in the deep,
And pray the sea-sisters to lull it to sleep
For wakeful it wandered with me.

I would pray the sea-sisters remember its grace,
As I remember its burdening embrace.
Hot tears and wild laughter, dark pain and mad play —
'T was my friend and my foe when together we lay!
What dreams it hath dreamèd with me!

Then reach me and teach me thy wind-speech again —
Brother, Brother, I 've lived among men!
Prove me the range of the sea and the sky,
The leagues that I long for, the heights I would try,
Restore and reveal them to me.

For I prayed but one prayer — incarnate of air,
With Space and with Song and with Silence to lair,

To flee, shod with joy, past the uttermost bars
Of night's height, on and on up the stair of
the stars,
Forever and ever with thee!

THE END

If I could take fire and the light of all the lands
And fling it backward over my book;
If I could take the flowers of this Spring and
wreathe them into many-coloured bands
And turning backward, garland my book;
If I could take gems from the dark mountain and
shells from the shining sands
And kneeling, backward, deck my book;
If I could take Beauty herself and naked Truth
and white Humility by their strong hands
And lead them backward into my book;
If I could sing this one song so sweetly (here at the
end as it stands)
That the sound should float backward through my
book;

But no, my songs — Strangers — you are naught
but a spent wave.
O you flung yourselves high, but for me you have
fallen in your grave!

Your souls not the whitest light of this morn can glorify,
Nor this eve's clearest cry.

Let me go away. I would drink of deeper wells.
All around me are fire and flowers and gems and shining shells.
Mayhap I will seek again to sing what mine eyes see.
O my wayward soul — lead me to Beauty herself, to Truth and to Humility!

Que tout dieu s'envole, sitôt créé ;

Que toute création périsse, sitôt créée ;

Que l'ancien dieu offre sa création au jeune dieu afin qu'elle soit broyée par lui ;

Que tout dieu soit dieu du moment.

Marcel Schwob.

NOTE

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